

Start Here

The memoir tells the story. This workbook helps you practice. Read this page, choose three small practices, then turn to the lesson.

Time: 5 minutes to read, 10 minutes to choose your three practices.

Name: _____

What this is

The Lōkahi Ola Method Workbook is a practical companion to *Ashes Still Sing: A Marine's Reckoning*. It is in development. This sample is a draft: this page, one full lesson, and a daily check-in. Each lesson carries its own short story, so you can begin without the memoir.

What it stands on

This is a Christian workbook. It rests on Scripture and depends on God's grace and the Holy Spirit. The practices are a response to what God has already done. They are not a way to earn his acceptance. Read Ephesians 2:8-10 beside every page that asks you to try harder.

Choose three practices

Pick one for the body, one for the mind, one for the soul. Give each a **cue** (something you already do), a **normal version**, and a **small version** for hard days. Small counts.

PRACTICE	CUE (WHAT I ALREADY DO)	NORMAL VERSION	SMALL VERSION
Example (a reader, not Guy). Body	After I pour my coffee	A ten-minute walk	Two minutes of easy movement
Example. Mind	When I sit down at my desk	Write the one thing I will finish today	Write one word
Example. Soul	Before I open my phone	Read a short passage and pray	Pray one sentence

My body

My mind

My soul

Then

The lesson asks you to write one plan and try it once. Do not start the daily check-in yet.

Day 1 is the day you first try your plan. Check in once a day for seven days, Day 1 through Day 7.

After seven days, show it to someone you trust and change one obstacle. Add a new practice only when the ones you have are manageable.

Next step: go on to Lesson 6, The Comparison Thief.

This workbook offers discipleship, life skills, and coaching exercises. It is not medical care, therapy, or a treatment program, and coaching supports professional care without replacing it. Keep seeing your doctor or counselor. If you are in crisis, call or text 988. Veterans can call 988, then press 1.

LESSON 6 OF 16 (WORKING PLAN) · MEMOIR LINK: CHAPTER 6, UPPERCLASSMAN

The Comparison Thief

Do the work in front of you when someone else's ability shakes you.

STEP	WHAT YOU DO	TIME
1. Story	Read it. Notice where you hear the voice.	10 min
2. Scripture	Read Hebrews 12:1-3 slowly, in context.	10 min
3. Reflection	Answer four questions about the voice.	10 min
4. Write the plan	Name the voice. Choose the preparation entrusted to you. Give it a cue.	15 min
5. Obstacle plan	Write if-then lines for the voice and for what you are tempted to do.	10 min
6. Try it once	Do your plan at your next real chance, even if the voice talks.	Next chance
7. Review and prayer	Review what happened. Pray.	10 min

You will need: a pen, or this PDF open on your phone, and a Bible if you have one. The Scripture is printed in the lesson too. Steps 1 to 5 take about 55 minutes of reading and writing, and step 7 adds 10 more. Steps 1 to 3 fit one sitting (30 minutes). Steps 4 and 5 fit another (25 minutes). Step 6 waits for your next real chance, and step 7 comes right after it.

The story

Draft. Memoir lines are quoted word for word from the current manuscript, with their chapter. A section marked Guy's account is his own telling for this workbook. It is not in the manuscript, and Guy should confirm the wording.

GUY'S ACCOUNT FOR THIS WORKBOOK

NOT IN THE MANUSCRIPT

Seeing other wrestlers made me more nervous. I said things to myself like, "They are better than you." "You look sloppy." I did not want them to beat me easily. I wanted to make it a dog fight. I turned my fear into anger.

FROM THE MEMOIR. CHAPTER 5, COMING OF AGE, "THE MAT"

"Wrestling wasn't freedom. It was exposure."

My first meet. "I sat on the edge of the mat area and tied my laces twice because my hands wouldn't stop shaking." Then: "The kid across from me gripped my hand hard like he was trying to intimidate my bones." "I lost on points." My coach said, "Now you know what it is. You'll be better."

FROM THE MEMOIR. CHAPTER 5, COMING OF AGE, "THE MAT"

After a timed mile: "I'd just run a 4:52. But the district guys were running sub-4:30." "The gap wasn't a gap. It was a canyon." I told my coach, "I'm going to wrestle."

Next step: read on. The pattern did not stay on the mat.

The story, continued

Time: The story (step 1) takes 10 minutes across this page and the one before. Read slowly. Underline one sentence that sounds like you.

GUY'S ACCOUNT FOR THIS WORKBOOK

NOT IN THE MANUSCRIPT

If I watched dancers who were better than me, I felt self-conscious. I felt jealous, and I stopped dancing when they were around. When I stopped focusing on them and focused on myself, they became self-conscious.

GUY'S ACCOUNT FOR THIS WORKBOOK

NOT IN THE MANUSCRIPT

I'd get nervous around certain runners I heard ran three miles in under 17 minutes.

FROM THE MEMOIR. CHAPTER 9, CHANGE IS INEVITABLE. A BREAK DANCING SCENE THAT WENT DIFFERENTLY

A Marine in the barracks started breakdancing. Of his dancing I wrote: "It was discipline turned into art." Of my own: "I tried it. And I was trash. But I was eager trash." "You got something," he said.

FROM THE MEMOIR. CHAPTER 6, UPPERCLASSMAN. BEFORE AND DURING A MATCH

"What moved through me wasn't soft. It was anger, revenge, pain, and years of hunger compressed into one current running from my jaw to my feet." My opponent was "calm, trained, backed by years of rooms I had never been invited into." "I didn't see a boy bigger than me. I saw every mile he had on me. Every hand that had steadied him. Every door that had opened before he touched the handle." With seconds left: "A plan formed in the space where panic usually lives". Then: "The gym became very small. Just the mat. Just the clock." ... "the work deposited all summer waiting to be collected." "The gym erupted and I went with it."

What the story shows

WORKBOOK TEACHING

Comparison often arrives as a voice: *they are better than you, you look sloppy*. People answer it in different ways. Some freeze. Some leave the floor. Some turn fear into anger and fight. Anger can get a person through a hard hour, and that is real. In the Chapter 6 match, anger fills the room, and what decides it is a plan and the work already done. But anger is not the same as the race entrusted to you. It keeps your eyes on the other person, and so does jealousy. The point of this lesson is simpler: complete your own preparation. Do the next step you planned, whatever the other person is doing and however they respond. Noticing another person's skill is not the problem. You can learn from it, after your own work is done.

Three lines to keep

DRAFT ONLY

- "They are better than you. You look sloppy." That was the voice I heard.
- I turned my fear into anger. I wanted to make it a dog fight.
- I stopped watching them and finished my own preparation.

Drafts built from Guy's account and from the lesson's point. They are not memoir text. Guy should rewrite them in his own words.

Next step: now read what Scripture says about running your own race.

What Scripture says

Time: 10 minutes. Read the passage twice, out loud if you can.

HEBREWS 12:1-3 (WORLD ENGLISH BIBLE, PUBLIC DOMAIN)

¹ Therefore let us also, seeing we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, ² looking to Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising its shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³ For consider him who has endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, that you don't grow weary, fainting in your souls.

In context BIBLICAL TEACHING

Hebrews was written to believers who were growing tired. The "cloud of witnesses" points back to the people of faith in chapter 11. The "race" is the long endurance of the Christian life. It is "set before us", given and not self-chosen. The center of the passage is verse 2: **looking to Jesus**. He is the author and perfecter of our faith. He endured the cross for joy and sat down at God's right hand.

The passage does not promise a better time on any clock or a win on any mat.

The principle BIBLICAL TEACHING

Fix your eyes on Jesus and on the course he has given you. Other runners are not the measure. Jealousy and anger keep your eyes on them, and neither one is the race. Two short companions say the same thing: when Peter asked about another disciple, Jesus answered, "What is that to you? You follow me" (John 21:22, WEB). And "let each man examine his own work" (Galatians 6:4, WEB).

My application PERSONAL APPLICATION

Hebrews says to lay aside "every weight." It does not name comparison, jealousy, or anger. I am applying it that way: when the voice says someone is better than me, and I freeze, quit, or fight angry, those are weights I can set down. Then I look to Jesus and do the next step of the course he has given me.

Grace comes first BIBLICAL TEACHING

"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works" (Ephesians 2:8-9, WEB). Preparing faithfully does not earn anything from God. It is how we respond to what he has already given.

Next step: take the passage into your own life. Reflection questions are next.

Reflection

Time: 10 minutes. Short answers are fine. Honest beats long.

1. When do I hear the voice that says someone is better than me, or that I look sloppy? What exactly does it say?

Example (a reader, not Guy): *At the gym, when the platform fills with people who are stronger than me. It says, "They are all better than you. You look sloppy."*

2. When it speaks, what am I tempted to do: freeze, quit, or fight angry?

Example: *Quit. I stand near the wall, check my phone, and leave early.*

3. What am I afraid is true if they are better than me?

Example: *That I am not as good as I tell people I am.*

4. What is the work that was given to me in that moment? Not theirs, mine.

Example: *My own planned sets, at my own weight, in order.*

Next step: underline what you are tempted to do in question 2 and the work you named in question 4. You will write your plan for that work next.

Optional extended journaling (15 minutes, set a timer). Write one page about the last time you heard the voice that said someone was better than you. Stop when the timer ends. If it stirs up more than you can carry alone, stop and talk to someone you trust, or to a professional.

Write your plan

Time: 15 minutes. Writing only. You will try the plan in step 6, after you plan for obstacles.

Write down the voice in its own words. Then choose **one** piece of preparation entrusted to you, the work that is yours to do when the voice is loud. Give it a cue. Three steps at most, and a small version for a hard day.

PART	MY PLAN
Example (a reader, not Guy). Situation	Saturday morning lifting, a crowded gym
The voice, in its words	"They are all stronger than you. You look sloppy."
Preparation (three steps at most)	Write my three lifts before I leave home. Do my own sets in order, at the weights I wrote. Finish my last set before I look around.
My cue, in a few words	"My set. My form."
Small version for a hard day	Do the first lift only, then decide.
When I will try it once	This Saturday, 8:00 a.m.

My situation

The voice, in its words

My preparation (three steps at most)

My cue

My small version

When I will try it once

Practice details are general. Adjust them to your health and ability. If you have an injury or a medical condition, ask your doctor or physical therapist first.

Next step: plan for what will get in the way. The obstacle plan is next. Do not try the plan yet.

Obstacle plan

Time: 10 minutes. Do this before you try the plan, not after it fails.

Old habits know your excuses, and the voice tends to use the same words each time. Decide ahead of time what you will do. Use more than one support: a prepared plan, a cue, another person, and a way back.

WHAT GETS IN THE WAY	EARLY SIGN	DEFENSE BEFORE PRESSURE	IF THE DEFENSE FAILS
Example (a reader, not Guy). The voice says I look sloppy and they are better	I check the mirror, then my phone	Say my cue. Do the next set I wrote down.	Do the small version. Do not leave early.
Example. I want to prove them wrong by fighting angry	My jaw is tight and I reach for more weight than I wrote	Keep the written weights. Say my cue.	Go back to the written weight and finish the set.
Example. I want to quit and avoid the room	I tell myself I am too tired	Start with a friend or a coach	Do the first lift, then decide

My if-then line for the voice. Use the exact words you hear: *If the voice says ____, then I will ____.*

Example (a reader, not Guy): *If the voice says, "You look sloppy," then I will say my cue and do the next set I wrote down.*

Who will know my plan? Pick one person who will expect an honest report, not a perfect one.

Example: *A friend who will ask me straight. I will text him Saturday after the session, whatever happened.*

Rehearse it once, now. Say your cue out loud. Picture the moment the early sign appears. Say what you will do.

Next step: tell that one person your plan today. Then turn the page and try your plan once.

Try it once. Review and pray.

Step 6. Try it once AT YOUR NEXT REAL CHANCE

Read your plan. Say your cue. Then do the preparation, even if the voice comes along. Success today means you did the work you wrote down. It does not mean you won.

When the voice shows up: notice it and say, "There it is." Name what you are tempted to do: freeze, quit, or fight angry. Say your cue. Do the next written step. Study the other person's technique later, after the session.

The day I tried my plan (this is Day 1): _____

Step 7. Review and prayer 10 MINUTES, RIGHT AFTER STEP 6

Did I finish the preparation? ☐ Yes ☐ Partly ☐ Not this time

Example (a reader, not Guy): Partly. I did my first two sets in order, then I started watching the guy on the next rack.

What did the voice say, and what did I do next? Freeze, quit, fight angry, or my plan?

Example: It said I looked sloppy. I wanted to quit. I said my cue and did the third set.

What made it hard? What will I keep, simplify, or drop?

Example: The third step felt like too much. Keep the cue and the main sets. Drop the third step for now.

Pray

Take this to God in your own words. If it helps, here is a short prayer to start from.

Lord Jesus, you endured the cross for the joy set before you. Keep my eyes on you and not on the person beside me. Forgive me where fear turned to envy or anger. Give me what I need for the next step in front of me. Amen.

A sample prayer. Guy may want to replace it with his own.

My next faithful action: Example: Do the same plan on Wednesday, and ask the coach how he trains.

Day 1 is the day you first try your plan. Check in once a day for seven days, Day 1 through Day 7.

Next step: fill in Day 1 of your check-in tonight, then one block a day through Day 7. If you miss a day, do the small version. You are not behind.

Credits and limits. Scripture is from the World English Bible (public domain). Memoir quotations are from the author's current manuscript. Lines marked as Guy's account are not in it. This sample cites no health research. Before publication it needs review by a pastor or theologian and, where health is involved, by qualified professionals. Coaching supports professional care and does not replace it.

Daily check-in

Time: 3 minutes, once a day, seven entries in all. Fill them in on your phone, or print the page.

Day 1 is the day you first try your plan. Check in once a day for seven days, Day 1 through Day 7.

Saving: Fill in one block a day and save the PDF each time. If your PDF app will not save, use the web version, which keeps your answers on your own device only, or print this page. For a clean copy, save a fresh copy of the blank PDF before you start.

My practices and cues (from Start Here)

Body _____ **Mind** _____ **Soul** _____

Example (a reader, not Guy). *Body: walk, after my coffee. Day 1: Body Normal, Mind Small, Soul Normal. The voice showed up: yes. Prepared on purpose: laid out my gym bag the night before. What I did next: said my cue and kept going. Tomorrow's first step: my first set, before I look at anyone else.*

Day 1 **Date** _____ **Did the voice show up?** ☐ No ☐ Yes **Tomorrow's first step** _____
Body ☐ Normal ☐ Small ☐ Not today **Mind** ☐ Normal ☐ Small ☐ Not today **Soul** ☐ Normal ☐ Small ☐ Not today
I prepared on purpose _____ **If the voice showed up, I did** _____

Day 2 **Date** _____ **Did the voice show up?** ☐ No ☐ Yes **Tomorrow's first step** _____
Body ☐ Normal ☐ Small ☐ Not today **Mind** ☐ Normal ☐ Small ☐ Not today **Soul** ☐ Normal ☐ Small ☐ Not today
I prepared on purpose _____ **If the voice showed up, I did** _____

Day 3 **Date** _____ **Did the voice show up?** ☐ No ☐ Yes **Tomorrow's first step** _____
Body ☐ Normal ☐ Small ☐ Not today **Mind** ☐ Normal ☐ Small ☐ Not today **Soul** ☐ Normal ☐ Small ☐ Not today
I prepared on purpose _____ **If the voice showed up, I did** _____

Day 4 **Date** _____ **Did the voice show up?** ☐ No ☐ Yes **Tomorrow's first step** _____
Body ☐ Normal ☐ Small ☐ Not today **Mind** ☐ Normal ☐ Small ☐ Not today **Soul** ☐ Normal ☐ Small ☐ Not today
I prepared on purpose _____ **If the voice showed up, I did** _____

Day 5 **Date** _____ **Did the voice show up?** ☐ No ☐ Yes **Tomorrow's first step** _____
Body ☐ Normal ☐ Small ☐ Not today **Mind** ☐ Normal ☐ Small ☐ Not today **Soul** ☐ Normal ☐ Small ☐ Not today
I prepared on purpose _____ **If the voice showed up, I did** _____

Day 6 **Date** _____ **Did the voice show up?** ☐ No ☐ Yes **Tomorrow's first step** _____
Body ☐ Normal ☐ Small ☐ Not today **Mind** ☐ Normal ☐ Small ☐ Not today **Soul** ☐ Normal ☐ Small ☐ Not today
I prepared on purpose _____ **If the voice showed up, I did** _____

Day 7 **Date** _____ **Did the voice show up?** ☐ No ☐ Yes **Tomorrow's first step** _____
Body ☐ Normal ☐ Small ☐ Not today **Mind** ☐ Normal ☐ Small ☐ Not today **Soul** ☐ Normal ☐ Small ☐ Not today
I prepared on purpose _____ **If the voice showed up, I did** _____

Scripture I am holding this week *Example: "Looking to Jesus" (Hebrews 12:2).* _____

Missed a day? Do the small version. Do not restart the week. Returning is part of the practice.

Next step: after Day 7, show your check-ins to someone you trust.